(a) and (d) Under the ITEC Programme, when a requisition is received from a foreign government for nomination of an expert, the database is accessed for drawing the names of experts meeting the requirements, if available, and if not, the vacancy is circulated inviting applications/ nominations of eligible experts. Experts meeting the requirements are considered for nominations. The database on experts maintained is based on the experience profile of the experts only. Therefor, information on the number of persons belonging to SCs/STs among those nominated is not available.

As for Bilateral Assignments, in respect of Maldives, out of a total of 27 experts, 2 were SC/ST (7.4%). Of the 220 experts sent to Bhutan, 10 were SC/ST (4.5%). In respect of experts sent to Nepal, the SC/ST aspect is not reflected in the application forms filled in by the candidates. Hence, this information is not available.

SC/ST Ambassadors and High Commissioners

4921. SHRI VENDHAMMA VIRIYO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether SC/ST Parliamentarians in the representations submitted to the prime Minister on 17th December, 1996, 1st September, 1997 and 23rd July, 1998 have demanded placement of SC/ST Officers as Ambassadors/High Commissioners/Heads of Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad;

(b) is so, the action taken thereon and results achieved; and

(c) the total number of posts of Indian Ambassadors/High Commissioners/Heads of Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad and number of persons belonging to the ST/ST working against such posts as 1st January, 1996 and 1st January, 2000.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The representations were forwarded by the Prime Minister's Office to the Ministry of Social Justic and Empowerment to be followed up by them with the other Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India for implementation.

(c) The total number of Indian Missions/Posts functioning abroad on 1.1.1996 was 152 and on 1.1.2000 was 157. The number of persons belonging to the SC/ST category working against the posts of Ambassadors/ High commissioners/Consul Generals on 1.1.1996 was 25 [SC-18; ST-7] and on 1.1.2000 was 22 [SC-13; ST-9]

Backlog of Vacancies Reserved for SC/ST in Ministry of External Affairs

4922. PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Dr. Ambedkar Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee recommended to fill the Backlog of vacancies reserved for the SC/ST in the year 1993;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon and results achieved, in any;

(c) if not, the rasons therefor;

(d) the number of vacancies reserved for SCs/STs which remained unfilled as on 1st January, 1993 in Class I, II, III, and IV category under the Ministry of External Affairs and its autonomous/statutory/attached offices and action taken to fill these vacancies; and

(e) the backlog of vacancies as on 29th August, 1997 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) The overall guidelines for all Ministries/Departments of the Government of India with regard to filling up of posts for SC/ST/OBC candidates are formulated by the Department of Personnel and Training. The Ministry of External Affairs strictly adheres to these guidelines.

(a) and (e) The information in respect of the number of vacancies for SCs/ STs in the Ministry of External Affairs as on 1st January 1993 is placed below in a tabulated statement (See below). To fill up these vacancies, appropriate indents have been placed with Staff Selection Commission/Union Public Service Commission. The information in respect of the Statutory/autonomous and attached offices of the Ministry is being collected and shall be laid on the table of the House.